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UNCLAS VIENNA 003397

SIPDIS

STATE FOR IO/UNESCO AND EUR/AGS - VIKMANIS-KELLER

COMMERCE FOR ITA/USFCS - THOMAS MOORE AND ITA/MAC - KELLY

PARSONS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: ETRD PREL SCUL AU UNESCO

SUBJECT: UNESCO CULTURAL DIVERSITY CONVENTION -- FOLLOW-UP

DEMARCHE TO AUSTRIA

REF: A. (A) VIENNA 3375

1B. (B) STATE 189518

1C. (C) VIENNA 3322

1D. (D) STATE 184292

1E. (E) VIENNA 3246

1F. (F) STATE 170909

11. Following up on delivery of Secretary Gutierrez's letter on Friday, October 14 (ref a), EconPolCouns and Senior Commercial Officer met on October 18 with Gabriela Habermayer, head of the Multilateral Trade Affairs Division of the Austrian Ministry for Economics and Labor.

12. Habermayer said Austria supported the current draft of the UNESCO Cultural Diversity Convention. She noted that the convention had responded to discussions in Europe of the need to define Europe's cultural identity. After the defeat of the EU constitutional referendum in France earlier this year, Europeans had given even more support to the concepts in the Cultural Diversity Convention.

13. On the trade aspects of the convention, Austria has argued that international agreements should be mutually supportive, Habermayer said. There was no change in the EU position on the General Agreement on Trade in Services, she noted. Austria supported the principle of not including cultural aspects in GATS discussions, she added.

van Voorst